

REMARKS

Claims 1-12, 14-36, and 38-44 were pending in the application. Claims 24 and 35 have been cancelled. Claim 32 has been amended. Claims 1-12, 14-23, 25-34, 36, and 38-44 are currently pending in the application.

35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejections, Claim Objections, and Allowable Subject Matter:

Claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nichols, U.S. Patent 5,977,908. Claim 24 was further rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Chisolm, U.S. Patent 6,934,629. Applicant submits that these rejections are now moot in light of the cancellation of claim 24.

Claims 32-35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hagiwara, U.S. Patent 5,926,151 in view of Chey, U.S. Patent 4,626,850. Claim 35 was objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has amended claim 32 to incorporate the features of now-cancelled claim 35, and thus submits that claim 32 is allowable for at least the reasons stated by the Examiner in the office action.

Allowed Claims:

Claims 1-23, 25-31 and 36-44 were allowed. Applicant appreciates Examiner's consideration of these claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicant submits the application is in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is requested.

If any fees are due, the Commissioner is authorized to charge said fees to Meyertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert, & Goetzel, P.C. Deposit Account No. 501505/5957-28504/EAH.

Respectfully submitted,



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04/06/06